

Chairman Powell: I am very concerned and disturbed about the proposed deregulation of media ownership scheduled to be decided on this June. Why the hurry? Why are you limiting debate and public input on an issue so critical to a robust democracy? The idea that deregulation will encourage diversity, localization and competition is ludicrous. We can already see the likely result will be wholesale homogenization of political, social, cultural and intellectual ideas and offerings by paying attention to ClearChannels rampaging takeover of 1200 radio stations, dramatically limiting local radio stations. It is only logical that those who can afford to buy radio and TV stations, newspapers and other media outlets will control the content and tenor of what we hear, see and read. The terrorism of 9/11 is seen by the President and many people in this country as an attempt to undermine democracy. Apparently the terrorists need do no more because we are doing their job for them, curtailing freedoms and compromising the constitution (e.g. the Patriot Act, today's Supreme Court decision regarding the right to bail for legal immigrants). Please at least grant an extension allowing more and more diverse voices to be heard on this extremely important issue. If you do not do so, your intentions will be suspect. My concern is that once media ownership is deregulated, if there should be dire unintended consequences, there will be little recourse for remediation. Thank you for your consideration of my concerns.